

Job 1168 K.S.5 -
DISTRESS.

**A
POETICAL ESSAY.**

Humbly Inscribed to the Right Honourable

JOHN Earl of RADNOR.

The Second Edition Corrected and Enlarged.

Per varios casus per tot discrimina rerum.

By Mr. ARNOLD.

L O N D O N:

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DISTRESS

POLITICAL

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

JOHN W. FOSTER OF R. A. D. N. O. R.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN THE YEAR 1840

AND 1841

BY

JOHN W. FOSTER

OF R. A. D. N. O. R.



DISTRESS.

HERE *Thames* profuse, and lavish of his
W Charms,

In sportive Vein the silver Crescent forms,
His progress winding, softly glides along,
So softly glides, he ling'ring seems to stay,
Full fond his fav'rite *Twick'nam* to embrace:
Beneath the Shade, embower'd as I lay,
The awful Gloom inspir'd the solemn Song,

DISTRESS

DISTRESS the Theme, and RADNOR deigns to hear;
 RADNOR, whose Friendship even honour'd POPE,
 ('Tho' now vouchsaf'd to a more humble Muse,)
 While here retir'd in philosophic Ease,
 He smiles----at the vain Bustle of a Court.

AID me, *Melpomene*! thou pensive Maid,
 But not of plunder'd Provinces to sing,
 Nor the dread Horrors of th' imbattled Plain,
 When fierce *Bellona* pours her Thunders round,
 And all is Ruin---Desolation all---
 Nor the tremendous Horrors of Distress,
 That roar in Tempest, and Confusion dire,
 Extending wide o'er all the troubled Deep;
 Nor that Distress so late conspicuous seen,

In

In the pale Face of those who greatly fear'd
 The Earth's Concussion, nor would trust their God;
 But vainly thought the Purpose of his Will
 ‡ To evade by Flight---
 Ah! how in vain, Omnipotence to fly
 'Tis Woe domestic that compells the Muse
 To paint the Ravage, and Havock cruel,
 Private Distress makes on the Sons of Men;
 That fell Distress which robb'd me of my Friend,
 The gay, the good, benevolent ALPHONSO:
 For oh! to fall from the Height of Affluence,
 To the Abyss of Want---Stupendious Shock!
 Dread Separation!---as when the Soul,

B

Strug-

‡ Alluding to the late Earthquake, when many Families retired from the
 City.

Struggling to quit the cumb'rous Load of Flesh,
Would wing its Passage to the Realms of Light.

THE well-fill'd Table now no more attracts
The jocund Eye, nor smiling Plenty now
O'er the rich Feast presides, but meagre Want,
With Harpy Talon drives her from the Board.
Nor does the joyous Bowl now sparkling glow,
Flush'd with rich Juice of Grape nectareous.
But pale, depriv'd of all the rosy Hue,
Its Loss bemoans in Tears of limpid Streams.
Add too, the Rigour of the Wintry Cold,
But poorly parry'd by the threadbare Coat;
Severer still — the lately decent Dress
Puts it's sad Master often to the Blush,

Now

Now gay Amusements---and the well trod Stage,
 Are all absorb'd in Scenes of real Grief;
 Nor Song---nor Dance---nor Music's soothing Voice,
 Is heard---alas! They fly the shatter'd Roof,
 Here moaping Melancholy dwells---her Head
 Reclin'd upon her shrivell'd Hand---but ill
 Supported by her trem'lous Knee---her Eye,
Fixt motionless---She pensive sits forlorn,
 Biting her Nails, and broods o'er Fears immense.

THESE, these are Ills indeed! --- yet tolerable,
 For rich Content will make the Balance ev'n.
 But then to lose the Quintessence of Life,
 Shut out from Commerce of the Social Kind,
 Where sprightly Wit, and Elegance of Manners,
 Raise high the Fancy, and refine the Soul;

(For

(For sure he's more than Man, or somewhat less,
 Who takes no Pleasure in Society)
 Or driv'n to Solitude, or forc'd to bear
 The noisy Jargon of Plebeian Tongues,
 Converse indelicate! avert it Heav'n!

AH! who can tell the agonizing Pain,
 Which like an Arrow pierceth to the Heart,
 Oft as by Chance we meet a quondam Friend,
 Conscious of Poverty, the down-cast Eye
 Would fain the Meeting shun; — but not so oft
 As insolent Contempt avoids our Path,
 Scowling with Eye askance — ah! dire Reverse,
 It was not thus, — when happier Fortunes smil'd,
 And circling Friends re-eccho'd our Applause.

When

When the glad Welcome hail'd th' obsequious Guest,
And the full Goblet crown'd the genial Day:

OH! 'tis a Task requires his utmost Art,
To stem the Torrent of Adversity,
To work the Vessel thro' a Sea of Woes,
And bravely head her against proud Disdain.

THIS must be done — nay more — he must submit
His every Action to be canvass'd o'er,
The Ridicule of every low Buffoon:
What tho' his Eloquence should far exceed
The *Ciceronian* Stile, — and solid Judgment,
Persuasion clear on ev'ry Accent hang,
Yet he's not heard, but pass'd unheeded by,

C

And

And every Fool can comment on his Words:
What boots it him? that kindly Nature gave,
What Science has improv'd, a Soul full-fraught
With noblest Purposes, and grand Designs;
Yet is he still depress'd — his Views confin'd,
Each rising Act by Disappointment cramp'd;
While keen Reflection preys upon the Sense,
Yet laudable Ambition prompts him on;
But ah! in vain his tow'ring Thoughts repuls'd,
A thousand Schemes distract his tortur'd Brain,
A thousand Passions agitate the Soul,
And all the Man is one intestine War.

SEE! black Despondence, with her gloomy Train
Of grisly Horrors hovers o'er the Soul,
Distrac-

Distraction, Frenzy seizing the sick Heart,
 Consign her over to the Fiend Despair,
 Which often ends in Dereliction dire,
 And sad Distrust of Providential Care ;
 Prompting to Suicide --- inevitable !
 Had not thy Goodness --- oh, all-wise Creator !
 Hedg'd in our Being, and so fenc'd it round,
 With Love of Life, Self-Preservation strong,
 We dare not leap the Boundaries prescrib'd ;
 Else would weak Man, oppress'd by Woes, rush out
 Of Life more oft ; for who can tell the Pangs
 Of modest Merit struggling with Distress,
 Whose Education lib'ral, whose gen'rous Mind,
 Can't brook Servility, nor stoop to ask
 Mean Pittance from the Hand of Charity ;

Not so the Beggar, who without a Blush,
 With clam'rous Bawl can roar his Wants aloud,
 Which not reliev'd he tauntingly returns,
 In mutt'ring Curses on th' unbounteous Hand;
 These, happy in the Dregs and Scum of Life,
 But little know what real Anguish means.

YE lordly Worldlings, who now rowl at Ease
 To City Feast, or Midnight Masquerade,
 How dare ye let the Worthy be depress'd,
 And thus confess the Impudence of Wealth?
 Cannot ye read this Picture of Distress?
 Must it be heighthen'd? Must the Look confus'd,
 And the Grief-shiv'ring Eye still speak in vain?
 Not so the great Benevolent --- who improve
 Each

Each Hint, each Intimation, that their Breast,
Or social Talk suggests --- both to prevent.
And to assist Distress --- whose Eye extends
Even beyond the Circle of Acquaintance,
Glad to find Merit in its lone Retreat,
To deal Benevolence diffusive round,
Unbounded --- Imitators of their God!

Oh! 'tis great to grapple with Adversity,
To wrest the Sceptre from her Iron Hand,
And dash in Pieces her embitter'd Cup ---
Hydra-headed Monster! thrice arduous Task!
More than *Herculean* Labour it requires
To cope with such a Foe ; --- how few enjoy
Fit Prowess to engage in equal Fight?

But he whose stubborn Virtue baffles her,
 Without the Aid of mean, or servile Arts,
 Nor has Recourse to Violence, or Fraud,
 And scorns to seek Relief fallacious,
 From the intoxicating purple Draught,
 A far more glorious Victory has gain'd,
 Than *Philip's* Son or *Cesar* e'er could boast.

BUT 'gainst this Foe what Arms shall we take up?
 Shall we in close Attrenchment wait th' Assault?
 Or greatly dare her to the open Field?
 Shall we with *Horace* ridicule her Pow'r,
 Deride her Force, and laugh her into Shame?
 Well might he laugh, when great *Augustus* smil'd,
 And the World's Master own'd him for his Friend:

Warm

Warm in the Beams of the *Augustan* Court,
 The icy Phangs of Poverty ne'r reach'd him ;
 It was *Mecenas* generous and benign,
 That animated all, and gave new Life,
 Else had his Wit in languid Numbers flow'd,
 And his unmeaning Satyr known no Sting.

SHALL we with *Seneca*, in formal, grave,
 Collected Maxims of the pedant Schools,
 Summon our boasted Reason to our Aid,
 And open War declare? but let us scorn
 To take the least Advantage of the Foe ---
 No; when she presseth sore, with heaviest Woes,
 Let us engage her then on equal Terms,
 Not when we are immers'd in Wealth immense,
 Sufficient Price for mighty Provinces. AWAY,

Away, ye Bablers of the Stoid Race,
 Wise, solemn Fools! Nature is Nature still,
 Whate'er your vaunted Apathy and Pride,
 Rank Pride and Vanity of Heart would boast,
 Oft prov'd too weak --- recoils upon itself,
 And gives our Nature the opprobrious Lie.

GREAT *Julius* tasted of desponding Fear,
 And wav'ring doubted ev'n to trust his Gods;
Brutus, in whom the Elements so nice
 Were mix'd --- that to be great and good were one,
 Could not survive *Philippi's* fatal Shock;
 Ev'n *Cato's* rigid Virtue bow'd --- a Proof
 That mere Philosophy's no equal Match.

Pardon, great Shades! your Virtues I revere,

But ye were Men, and Men cannot but feel:

OH! let not those, whose Cup's but lightly dash'd—

Who never yet drank deep of dire Distress;

Define the Bitter of the nauseous Draught—

Let not the Hale and Sound, who never felt

Disease— mock at the Sick— too happy far

To judge aright, and draw Conclusions just.

NECESSITY, like Death, which levels all,

Would share the Empire with our mortal Foe,

Adding new Conquests to his grim Colleague,

Still daily glutting his voracious Maw,

Too oft the Greatest and the Best, his Prey:

E

Sad

Sad Truths! enough to terrify the Soul,
 And make her curse the Privilege of Thought.

No more — adieu — ye solitary Shades,
 Engend'ring Phantoms buzzing all around,
 Thick as a Cloud of Gnats on Summer Eve;
 Let sprightlier Scenes divert the gloomy Thought,
 And brighten Fancy with the gay Delight.

HAIL! RADNOR's ever-pleasing still Retreat,
 Where Art and Nature mutually combine
 To banish Grief, and anxious Care beguile,
 Filling the Mind with pleasing Reveries;
 Neatness and Beauty, what fam'd *Horace* sang,
Simplex Munditiis, the finish'd Whole

WHILST

WHILST Poetry's gay Sister here enrob'd,
 With various Colours of the rosy Morn,
 In Draughts diversify'd, suspends the Mind,
 Sweetly perplex'd in Approbation — See!
 Th' embattled Heroes live along the Wall,
 Wake the Attention, and provoke the Soul
 To Deeds of hardy Valour, worthy Fame;
 There the droll Piece in grotesque Figure plays
 Upon the Sense, excites the smerking Laugh,
 While dull-eye'd Melancholy steals away:
 Here the cool Grott, and there the cooler Stream,
 Whose gentle Current flows, clear, deep, serene,
 Emblem of RADNOR's philosophic Mind ---

ENOUGH,

ENOUGH, my Muse, nor too advent'rous soar —
 RADNOR! 'tis thine to please, or to instruct,
 To form the Manners, or to mend the Heart.

F I N I S.